Distr.
LIMITED

ECA/SDEHSD/IRD/85/INF.1
October 1985

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Regional Expert Consultation on the Role of Rural Co-operatives in the Productive Sectors in Africa

Addis Ababa, 7 - 11 October, 1985

AIDE MEMOIRE

1. Sponsorship

The Regional Expert Consultation on the Role of Rural Co-operatives in the Productive Sector in Africa is sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with FAO, ILO, UNIDO and ICA.

2. Venue and date

The Expert Consultation will take place in Africa, Hall, ECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from Monday 7 to Friday 11 October 1985.

3. Background of the consultation

Africa has considerable growth potential. Given equitable access to resources, appropriate priorities of their inter- and intra-sectoral allocations, and the democratic process of decision-making at all levels, as elaborated, besides others, in the ECA's Perspective Study[1/] (1983-2000) Africa can attain its "willed future", which the leaders had in mind when they adopted the Monrovia Strategy, the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos.

Africa is predominently rural and may remain so at the year 2000 and possibly beyond. Hence, the rural development of the member States of the region is synonymous with their national development. The development of rural life, institutions and

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1/ ECA, ECA and Africa's Development, 1983-2008, A Preliminary Perspective Study, Addis Ababa, 1983.

economy is the bootstrap by which Africa can hope to pull itself out of "The Paralysis of Multiple Debilitating Crises"[2/]. In this effort, the co-operative movement can play a vital role.

There are various aspects of the co-operative movement. The objective of this Consultation is to discuss its role in the rural productive sectors. Higher productivity and increased production, with equity and people's participation, is essential for a better quality of rural life. Moreover, a sustained economic development is a necessary condition for other aspects of the co-operatives, such as credit, marketing and service, to be viable. Africa has by now adequate experience of the efficacy of the production co-operatives under different ideological predilections. Given her current socio-economic crisis and the need for pragmatic organization structure and management to resolve the crisis, it is necessary to make an objective assessment of the rural production co-operatives and consider the policy measures to make them more efficient form of organization, with genuine grassroot involvement.

4. Purpose of the Consultation

The purpose of the Consultation is to:

i) review genesis, structure, declared objectives of the national production co-operatives and their size and share within the co-operative sector and the overall economy;

ii) consider the policies - past and present - of the Governments towards production co-operatives;

iii) evaluate the impact of production co-operatives in rural areas on extension services, expansion of technology, the integrated co-operative system, productivity, income and food security through increased food production and its equitable distribution; and

iv) propose measures to promote production co-operatives in rural areas, and policies and promotional institutions needed for the creation of a more conducive climate for the growth and success of production co-operatives.

2/ A. Adedeji, The African Development Problematique, ECA, Addis Ababa, 1985

5. Agenda

The following provisional agenda is proposed:

i) Opening statement

ii) Election of a Chairman and a Rapporteur

iii) Adoption of the Agenda and the Timetable

iv) Substantive items of the Consultation:

(a) presentation of country papers by the participants from Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Sudan and Tanzania;

(b) presentation of papers by FAO, ILO, ICA and UNIDO;

(c) presentation of the synthesis paper on "The Role of Rural Co-operatives in the Productive Sectors in Africa" by ECA;

(d) round-up discussion on the experience of rural co-operatives in the productive sectors in Africa and of proposed recommendations; and

(e) consideration and adoption of the report.

6. Documentation

The following papers will be made available to the participants:

I. Production Co-operatives and Rural Development in Benin (ECA/SDEHSD/IRDS/WP.1) by Mr. P.D. Coco (Benin)

II. Production Co-operatives and Rural Development in Ethiopia (ECA/SDEHSD/IRDS/WP.2) by Mr. Tegegne Teka (Ethiopia)

III. Production Co-operatives and Rural Development in Ghana (ECA/SDEHSD/IRDS/WP.3) by Mr. J.A. Dadson,(Ghana)

IV. Co-operatives as instruments of rural development in the Sudan (ECA/SDEHSD/IRDS/WP. by Mr. M.H. Awad (Sudan)

V. Production Co-operatives and Rural Development: The Tanzanian Case (ECA/SDEHSD/IRDS/WP.5) by Mr. T.J. Mahuwi (Tanzania)

VI. Experiences of Agricultural and Rural Co-operatives in Socialist Countries of Africa by FAO, Romo

VII. Co-operatives in Food Production, with particular reference to food shortages and security by ILO, Geneva

VIII. Policies and measures to promote industrial co-operatives in Africa, by UNIDO, Vienna

IX. The conditions necessary for successful production co-operatives by ICA, Geneva

X. The role of rural co-operatives in the productive sectors in Africa (synthesis paper) (ECA/SDEHSD/IRD/85/WP.6) (by ECA).

7. Officers and secretariat

(a) The officers of the Consultation will consist of a Chairman and a rapporteur to be elected from among the experts of the African region attending the Consultation

(b) The staff of the Consultation will include staff members of ECA.

8. Language

The working language of the Consultation will be English only.

9. Accommodation

The ECA secretariat will be pleased to arrange accommodation for the participants. For this purpose, at least two weeks' notice should be given indicating date of arrival, flight and estimated time of arrival and type of accommodation required.

10. Arrival and departure

Arrangements will be made to meet arriving participants and assist them through immigration and customs and to facilitate their transfer to their hotels and transport to ECA. Notification of arrival should be communicated by telex to:

Officer-in-Charge
Social Development, Environment & Human Settlements Division
Economic Commission for Africa
P.O.Box 3001
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Telex No. 21029 UNECA ET, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

11. Travel requirements

(a) Participants should be in possession of a valid passport and entry visa. Visas may be obtained from any diplomatic mission or consulate of the Government of Ethiopia. Where no such mission exists, visas will be arranged on arrival at Addis Ababa airport.

(b) International health certificates, with valid inoculation against yellow fever and cholera are required.

12. Currency and exchange

Participants may bring with them foreign currency in the form of travellers cheques and cash in convertible currencies, to be exchanged for Ethiopian Birr. They are advised to obtain and keep receipts when exchanging foreign currency since they have to be returned to Customs Officers when leaving the country. Banking facilities are available at ECA and at the hotels.

13. Climate

The altitude of Addis Ababa is 2,800 metres above sea level. This ensures generally an almost all-year-round temperate climate. The average temperature is 15-20°. The weather is usually sunny.

14. Registration

A registration desk will be opened in the corridor leading to the meeting room on Monday, 7 October 1985.

15. Identification badges

Identification badges will be issued to the participants at the time of registration. Participants are requested to have the badges on their persons, ready for inspection if so requested by the security guards.

16. Bank

Main lobby (ground floor).

17. Travel desk

Ethiopian airlines office is situated in the main lobby (ground floor).

18. Financial responsibilities

ECA will pay for the cost of attendance and participation in the Expert Consultation for the experts of the African region, to whom formal invitations were extended; (i.e. Benin, Ghana, Tanzania, Sudan, Kenya, Zambia, Senegal, Mauritius, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Somalia).